

Abstract

A wet etching apparatus and method to shorten processing time and to eliminate formation of unintended mask pattern are described. In the conventional art, after a mask pattern is formed, alien substances such as water mist or stain are left on the substrate. The alien substances act as an etching block in the wet etching process. This generates an unintended mask pattern. The present invention uses ultraviolet light to remove the alien substances prior to the etching process. When the alien substances are removed, the intended mask pattern is generated after the etching process. The wet etching device according to the present invention includes an ultraviolet cleaner and a conveyor to convey substrates to and from the ultraviolet cleaner. Spaces for the ultraviolet cleaner and the conveyor are created in the wet etching apparatus by reducing space for cassettes and reducing space required by the loader. As a result, alien substances can be removed without the need for separate sets of equipment, which reduces processing time, simplifies the process, and increases both productivity and reliability.